

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 10-13, 16, and 17 are allowable.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 10-17 are pending in this application. Claims 10, 14, and 16 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 10, 14, and 16.

Objection

The specification was objected to because the abstract included the implied phrase, "is disclosed." The abstract has been amended to remove that phrase. Further, the abstract has been amended to be consistent with claim 10 as allowed by the Examiner.

Amendments to Claim 10 and 12

Claims 10 and 12 have been amended in this reply to correct an error resulting from the previous amendment to claim 10. Specifically, the occurrence of "the at least one pilot blade" has been amended to be "the pilot blade" to have proper antecedent basis. This amendment was not made in view of any prior art of record or otherwise known to the Applicant. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C § 102

Claims 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,213,229 (“Majkovic”). Claim 14 has been amended in this reply. To the extent that the Examiner maintains the rejection to amended claim 14, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 14 recites a reaming tool that comprises a body adapted to couple to a drill string at both axial ends and a plurality of reaming blades affixed to the body. Selected ones of the plurality of reaming blades have at least one cutter attached thereto, and at least one of the selected ones of the plurality of reaming blades has at least one insert on a laterally outermost surface. As amended, claim 14 recites that the plurality of reaming blades comprises “at least one radially most extensive reaming blade.” This amendment does not constitute new matter as reaming blades with varying radial extent are disclosed in Figure 3 and throughout the specification.

Majkovic discloses a stabilizer that is intended to be located on a drill string between a mud motor and a drill bit. Majkovic further discloses that “the transverse diameter of the drill bit 16 is substantially the same as the transverse diameter of the stabilizer 14 (Column 2, line 61, with reference to Figure 1).” Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would not equate the lands 30 (Figure 1) with the reamer blades of the present invention because “a reamer,” as used in the art, refers to a tool that *enlarges* an existing well bore. Because the transverse diameter of the lands disclosed by Majkovic are “substantially the same” as the transverse diameter of the drill bit for which it is designed to be used with, enlargement of the well bore is not accomplished. Applicant further notes that Majkovic does not disclose *cutters* disposed on the lands, as

is recited in claim 14 with respect to reaming blades.

Majkovic discloses that inserts 32 may be located such that they extend outwardly from the lands 30 to define the transverse diameter of the stabilizer 14 (Column 3, line 7). Majkovic discloses that the inserts allow the stabilizer to function as a “reamer-stabilizer” as the drill bit wears down (*i.e.* goes under-gage) by reaming the well bore to maintain gage (Column 3, lines 38-60). When this occurs, an increase in pressure of the drilling fluid may be observed by a driller, which indicates that the drill bit should be replaced (Column 3, line 48).

In contrast to Majkovic, the reamer recited in amended claim 14 has a plurality of *reaming blades* with selected ones having at least one *cutter* attached thereto. Further, at least one of the reaming blades that has a cutter *also* has an insert disposed on a laterally outermost surface. Majkovic only discloses inserts on a laterally outermost surface while being silent on the presence of cutters. Thus, assuming *arguendo* that the lands disclosed by Majkovic are considered to be reaming blades, Majkovic still fails to disclose a reaming blade having both an insert on a laterally outermost surface *and* a cutter.

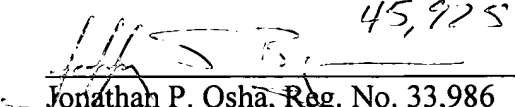
Majkovic explicitly discloses that the stabilizer is cylindrical (column 2, line 41). Accordingly, each of the lands has substantially the same radial extent. Thus, Majkovic neither shows nor suggests having at least one radially extensive reaming blade, as recited in claim 14.

In view of the above, Majkovic fails to show or suggest the present invention as recited in amended claim 14. Thus, amended claim 14 is patentable over Majkovic. Claim 15, which depends from claim 14, is allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 05516/045003).

Respectfully submitted,

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